

## **ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY**

Now, I also depart from the position taken by the Joint Appropriations Committee on two university-related issues. First is our request for enhanced oil recovery funding. That was not adopted by the Appropriations Committee. It's about \$2.4 million. I don't necessarily fault the Appropriations Committee for not adopting it. It was understandable that they would not adopt it in that it was a delayed request submitted well after the process was under way. And it was done that way because of the functioning of the joint legislative/executive task force and the time. I would only ask that, as you go through that bill, that you give serious consideration to reinserting that money.

And I believe it is important: The enhanced oil recovery effort is intended to rejuvenate the aging oilfields of Wyoming. Much of the resource that exists in this state remains untapped. The traditional means of extracting oil leaves a great deal of resource in the ground. We can access that resource, but it can only be accessed through a sustained effort and making sure that we fund it year in and year out. I hope that you'll look at that.

## **SPLIT ESTATES**

The other issue I was asked about is split estates. I was pleased that the Joint Judiciary Committee has unanimously reported out a bill giving fundamental recognition to the rights of the Wyoming citizens who live on our land. As we have all seen so many times, there are aspects of the proposed bill that do not fit our individual preferences. I'm certain there are parts of this bill that many of you do not prefer, but that should not preclude full consideration of the proposal. Some are suggesting that legislation on behalf of the landowner will stop coalbed methane development entirely – thereby bringing ruin and catastrophe to our state. To such alarmist speculation, I ask you to bring deliberation and reason.

Many of our sister states provide much more protection to the surface owners. Their development prospers. Their development continues. The companies that do business here do business there. We must read and understand what the bill does and what it doesn't do. If the proposal goes too far in some regards, we have the opportunity to alter it in this session. The bill you have does not allow a surface owner to stop mineral production. It does not change the fundamental relationship between the legal estates. The bill is simply about giving our friends and neighbors a voice in those limited circumstances where no one is willing to listen.

I was present in this hall and heard arguments in the 70s that, if we gave those surface owners who owned land over the coal estate any more authority than they had, that coal development would end in Wyoming. We gave them protection. That protection was ratified in the United States Senate and in Congress by the actions of Senator Cliff Hansen and Teno Roncalio – and coal development has occurred. I would encourage you to take this bill and look at it; if it goes too far, we can adjust it. But it is time that we recognize that the surface estate owner has some rights. We afforded those rights to the surface estate owner whose property is over coal.

This bill does not afford anything equivalent to the rights that the surface estate owner has over coal, but it does begin to move in a direction of providing some common courtesy and common communication. To those who say that it would be the end of coalbed methane development in Wyoming, I would say to them I heard the same argument with regard to surface owner consent to coal development, and we've had an immense amount of coal developed in this state. It will not undo coalbed methane. Please take a look at the bill and decide what you want to do.